LSAB Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board

Annual Report 2025/26

Foreword

I am very pleased to welcome you to the Annual Report for 2025/26.

The Annual Report provides an overview of our work, progress and achievements during the last 12 months. We have taken important steps forward on a range of issues, not least our quality assurances process and our ability to hear from all member organisations as to their work in progressing our shared ambitions. Our development of Safeguarding Adults Review processes, our focused member organisation audits, our joint work on areas such as domestic abuse and self-neglect are testament to that. There is always however more that needs to be done.

As we move into 2026/27 there is plenty to build upon. Safeguarding Adults Boards are responsible for coordinating the work of member organisations to safeguard people in Leeds. Largely their membership is made up from statutory organisations such as the Council, the Police and NHS organisations but safeguarding practice is so much wider than this.

Around February / March of this year however we heard from nearly 600 people (members of the public and professionals from all kinds of services) via on-line consultations, as well as direct conversations with numerous Voluntary Community Sector Enterprise (VCSE) organisations in Leeds. This highlighted the huge commitment and expertise across the city, as well as the opportunity for us build upon these relationships to support the development of citywide safeguarding practices. Our learning this year will enable us to progress next year through further forums and action plans that support our ability to learn from and work together effectively across sectors.

Alongside these local opportunities comes the news of the establishment of a National Safeguarding Adults Board. Too often Safeguarding Adults Boards across the country are left to find solutions in isolation of each another. The establishment of a National Safeguarding Board announced in March 2026 is intended to provide 'decisive action… needed to provide national oversight and scrutiny of adult safeguarding, helping to protect the most vulnerable from harm"[1]. The National Board will look to review legal frameworks and drive better implementation of practice nationally. I welcome this development as it promises a new national focus on safeguarding arrangements that can only benefit people in Leeds.

We are always learning, always taking steps forward and with both local and national opportunities to build upon I feel confident that we will continue to do so over the year ahead.

I'd like to end by thanking everyone for what you do: whatever your role, whatever your organisation, or whether you are a member of the public looking out for a friend, a family member, a neighbour or your local community. What you do makes a difference, and collectively it is all of you that are making Leeds a Safe Place for everyone. Thank you.





Richard Jones CBE
Independent Chair
Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board

[1] Letter to Baroness Casey: progress on adult social care reform recommendations - GOV.UK

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1. Our Vision:

Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board is an independent statutory body with a strategic responsibility to work with its members and partners to help and protect adults with care and support needs from abuse, neglect and self-neglect in Leeds.

The Board's vision is for Leeds to be: **A safe place for everyone**

To achieve this, the Board and its members work together to:

- Prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs
- Stop abuse or neglect wherever possible
- Address what has caused the abuse or neglect
- Safeguard adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live
- Promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned
- Raise public awareness so that communities as a whole, alongside professionals, play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect
- Provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or well-being of an adult[2]

2. Our Role

Safeguarding Adults Boards are established under the Care Act 2014 with a role that is distinct from its member organisations. Whilst member organisations provide safeguarding services and will support individuals in need of help and protection, the Board itself works strategically across its membership and with wider organisations to ensure there are safe arrangements in the city. This role is set out in legislation: "The way in which an SAB must seek to achieve its objective is by co-ordinating and ensuring the effectiveness of what each of its members does"[3].

The Board's coordination role includes:

- Provision of multi-agency safeguarding adults policy and procedures to ensure we are working together and with the person at risk
- Quality assurance processes around multi-agency working
- Identifying and sharing citywide learning
- Promoting awareness of safeguarding amongst the communities of Leeds
- Learning from lived experiences
- Learning from best practice as well as situations where it could have been better

The Board's role also involves gaining assurances from its members about effective arrangements being in place, this may involve:

- Multi-agency and single agency audits
- Assurances about learning from reviews
- Assurances about embedding Board priorities and learning

[2] Care and Support Statutory Guidance, Section 14.11 Aims of Safeguarding
[3] Care Act 2014; Section 43 (3)

3. Our Membership

A wide range of organisations are represented on the Safeguarding Adults Board in Leeds. This includes senior representatives from:

- Leeds City Council: Adults & Health
- West Yorkshire Police
- West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board
- Leeds and York Partnership NHS Trust
- Leeds Teaching Hospital NHS Trust
- Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust
- HMPPS: Probation Service
- West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Leeds City Council: Housing
- Advonet

Richard Jones CBE is the Independent Chair whose role involves providing leadership, challenge and support to the Board in achieving its ambitions. The Board also works with wider strategic bodies in Leeds to support people to be safe.

4. Our Ambitions

The Board's work is focused around four key ambitions that capture our areas of development.

- Developing citizen-led approaches to safeguarding
- Improving awareness of safeguarding across all communities and partner organisations
- Developing city-wide approaches to safeguarding practice
- Learning from experience to improve how we work

Each are explained in the following sections:

4.1. Developing citizen-led approaches to safeguarding

Why this is so important:

The Care Act 2014 challenged Safeguarding Adults Boards and its members to work in person-centred ways that involve listening to the person at risk, ensuring they are involved within decisions about their own safety and wellbeing, and seeking to achieve the changes they want wherever possible. Establishing this as a strategic ambition sets the model for the Board and the expectations for how individual organisations must work to provide individuals with help and protection across the city.

Highlights from 2025/26:

A. Talk to me, hear my voice

The 'Talk to me hear my voice' approach was first established within the Leeds Citizen-Led multi-agency policy and procedures in 2019 which includes the advice of nine citizen groups as to how they wish to be involved and supported. The phrase 'Talk to me, hear my voice' arises from these engagements and has become adopted as our key citizen-led message. It is an area we continue to focus on and Section 4.4.2 of this report highlights audit work undertaken by numerous member organisations to ensure these principles are embedded into practice. This is inspiring further work to

be undertaken in 2026/27 to ensure we consistenly hear people's views directly, and these are captured in their own words wherever possible.

B. Safeguarding ethnically diverse communities

We have been working with Voluntary Action Leeds, Safer Stronger Communities and the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership to develop a new approach to engagment with ethnically diverse communities in Leeds. This approach is inspired by learning from local research and engagement with community representatives.

This project has continued from 2024/25 but has entered a new phase. After a review of local safeguarding data, local demographic and public health profiles and engagement with local leaders the decision has been made to focus this work on particular Wards in the first instance as this will support connections between local communities and local service leads. The intention is to co-produce new models of practice or reporting routes that provides communities with the confidence to raise safeguarding concerns. Workshops with community groups are in the process of being arranged, the learning from which will be reported to all three Board's / Partnerships in the Autumn.

C. Safeguarding within faith communities

We have been working with Safeguarding Adults Boards and Safeguarding Children Partnerships across West Workshire and West Midlands to co-produce safeguarding guidance for faith communities. This will involve working with different faith communities to provide guidance that is explained in terms sensitive and relevant to their faith. This will result in guidance aimed principally at Islamic, Christian, Jewish, Buddist, Hindu and Sikh faiths – each will be available as a resource on the Board website. A consultation on the guidance was held in Leeds supported by Leeds Faith Forum during 2025. It was hoped that this guidance would be finalised during 2025/26 but for reasons beyond the Leeds Safeguarding Adult Board's control this will extend into 2026/27.

D. Consultations

The Board is committed to hearing the views of people across Leeds. During March / April 2026 the Board started seeking views on its priorities for 2026/27. A total of 581 responses were received via online and paper-based consultations:

- 449 from members of the public, including people with care and support needs, and carers.
- 78 from community voluntary, community, charity, sport organisations, education institutions, and commissioned services including care providers.
- 54 from Board member workforces.

In addition, the LSAB Chair and Engagement Officer held discussions with 14 community organisations. Feedback will form part our action planning for the year ahead. A Listening Event is being planned for July 2026 to explore themes such as safeguarding training, Cuckooing/home takeover, self-neglect, 'working together with Adults & Health'.

4.2. Improving awareness of safeguarding across all communities and partner organisations

Why this is so important:

It is recognised that members of the public are not always aware of safeguarding adults and how to get help. This is not unique to Leeds. Members of the public may not automatically know how to gain support unless this information is promoted by the Board and its member organisations. Similarly, we need to continue to support organisations across the city to understand their responsibilities to provide help and protect those at risk.

Highlights from 2025/26:

In additon to the Safeguarding Faith Communities and Safeguarding Ethnically Diverse Communities projects detailed above in Section 4.1 a range of other initiatives have also served to promote safeguarding adults as listed below:

A. Keeping safe from abuse & neglect talks

The Board invests in its own Engagement Officer to enable us to reach out and connect with community groups. Organisations that hosted talks last year, include:

- Bramham Village Hall
- Carers Leeds Concerned Others Group
- Caring Together in Woodhouse and Little London
- Greenside Pudsey Retirement Life complex
- Horsforth Women's Institute
- Housing Leeds Tenant and Resident Association meeting
- Kippax Community Group
- Leeds Sensory Services' Save Our Sight Group at Leeds Jewish Welfare Board
- Leeds Sensory Services' Hearing and Sight loss Group Morley
- Moor Allerton Everyone Cares (MaeCare)
- Neighbourhood Action in Farnley New Farnley and Moor Top
- Swillington Cosy Café
- Thorner Bungalow Community Event

Feedback on these talks continue to be positive, helping to directly raise awareness of abuse and neglect within communities. For information about how to request a talk, see the relevant page on our website: Talks for Community groups.

B. Online Resources

The Board also invested in developing a new website which launched in October 2024. The website is the central resource for information about safeguarding in the city and its development has enabled us to provide specific sections and resources for members of the public. The design allows us to be much more accessible to all users, including the ability to translate content into different languages. New information added to website for members of the public include:

- Information about Predatory Marriage and Forced Marriage
- Cuckooing Easy Read Information (produced with Connect in the North, Through the Maze, and Change)
- Cuckooing awareness film (incl. BSL version)
- A short film explaining a family member's experience of self-neglect

We include sections about how to keep safe, what is abuse, how to report it and what will happen next: Public | Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board; together with a Short Film about safeguarding in various language for people who prefer that medium.

C. Social media

We have also promoted safeguarding adults using social media. This included providing information via Instagram, X, Facebook and YouTube. We have continually sought to increase contacts across all channels to reach as many people as possible.

D. Physical resources

The website complements and also hosts our wider information resources, such as posters and leaflets, including easy read resources that explain what abuse is and how to seek assistance that can be printed to use at your local service or venue. The investment in a new website was to the benefit of members of the public as described above, but it also enabled the development of new resources for practitioners and services, and made the current resources much more accessible: I work with adults | Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board.

E. West Yorkshire Safeguarding Week – June 2025

We led on coordinating a regional West Yorkshire Safeguarding Week for 2025, involving each Safeguarding Adults Board, Safeguarding Children Partnership and Community Safety Partnership in the region. This involved a programme with sessions hosted by each district but available to all. Nearly 2000 training opportunities were taken up, nearly 900 of those were Leeds practitioners. See Appendix Three for details of the programme provided.

F. Leeds Safeguarding Fortnight – November 2025

The Leeds Safeguarding Fortnight took place during the weeks of 17th – 28th November 2025. It was hosted by the Safeguarding Adults Board, in conjunction with the Safeguarding Children Partnership and Safer Stronger Communities and was aligned with the national Safeguarding Adults Week hosted by the Ann Craft Trust. There were 20 broad and varied sessions covering many different topics. Again, details of the prgramme can be found in Appendix Three.

G. Establishment of Learning & Development (L&D) links across organisations

The Board has an establish network of Learning & Developmet Links who act as a conduit between the Board and their organisations and work collaboratively to support and enable the delivery of the Board's L&D priorities. 'Links' share information, resources and updates with their safeguarding teams and the wider organisation and take part in Task & Finish Groups which are focussed on delivering specific projects. 'Link' organisations are listed in Appendix One.

The approach was reviewed this year, with Board members and L&D Links confirming a high level of confidence in respect of the Link role. This is seen as an effective and arrangement that is working well and supports the Board's delivery of priorities.

H. Promoting learning & development opportunities

In support of learning and development we share information about training opportunities across the city enabling these to be accessed by more people. We sent out 53 messages to 'Learning & Development links' about approximately 70 different events as well as several calendars / flyers that offered multiple events communications last year. These were mostly free of charge. Feedback has been really positive that this is supporting the development of practice knowledge in Leeds.

I. Friends of the Board

We have maintained our Friends of the Board Network – there are now 25 organisations/services that work with us to to give advice, support workstreams and help us to promote safeguarding awareness. During 2025/26 we invited members to tell us where the challenges are, to inform our plans going forward. Membership is noted in Appendix One and any organisation wishing to become a 'Friend of the Board' can do so via our dedicated website page.

J. Board Bulletin

We have been promoting our Board Bulletin. With approximately 900 recipients, this is used to provide local, regional and national updates on safeguarding adults information and resources.

K. To help us understand what self-neglect training is available

In the context of our Self-Neglect Strategy, a task and finish group comprised of Board Links collated details of self-neglect training that is currently available within their organisation. This scoping showed that whilst self-neglect training is available it is mostly incorporated within generic safeguarding training. Further exploration affirmed that self-neglect is a challenging and complex area of practice and that practitioners may have different information and training needs.

In response to this review we are looking into providing a basic stand-alone self-neglect training resources primarily for people whose roles may bring them into contact within individuals who self-neglect. This would focus on what self-neglect is, the signs and indicators and what to do if you have a concern. We plan to identify further areas of self-neglect training which could be developed at a later date.

4.3. Developing city-wide approaches to safeguarding practice

Why this is so important:

The core function of the Safeguarding Adults Board is to coordinate the work of members so as to have effective safeguarding arrangments in Leeds. This means working with and across organsiations and other partnerships to develop a common understanding of issues and effective responses. Many areas of focus are drawn from our Safeguarding Adults Review learning, thus supporting change and development in the areas that will have the biggest impact for citizens in Leeds.

Highlights during 2025/26:

A. Multi-agency safeguarding polices, procedures and guidance

The Board provides the multi-agency safeguarding policies, procedures and guidance in Leeds to enable organisations to work together, and with the person at risk, in accordance with the legislative framework for safeguarding adults. This includes everything from procedures, practice guidance as well as learning and development resources, and useful information: I work with adults | Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board

Information about the application of the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures is summarised in Appendix Two. This includes information about how many safeguarding concerns were raised, how many safeguarding enquiries were undertaken and the outcomes of these.

B. Independent Review: Safeguarding and domestic abuse arrangements

In November 2025 the Board agreed to undertake an exploratory review of the effectiveness of our safeguarding arrangements for adults with care and support needs experiencing or at risk of domestic abuse. The review would explore the journey and experience of an adult with care and support needs within each of the following three scenarios:

- The abuse is first reported to the West Yorkshire Police
- The abuse is first reported to Leeds City Council: Adults & Health
- The abuse is first reported to Leeds Domestic Violence Services (LDVS)

By means of workshops with front-line practitioners and managers, reviews of local policies and procedures, local audits/service reviews and national guidance and research where available, the review will seek to identify systemic strengths and challenges in responding to individuals with care and support needs. Planning for the review commenced early 2026 but much of the review will be undertaken during the 2026/27 period and so will be reported within next year's annual report.

C. Decision Support Framework for Care providers

The Board has been working with Social Work and Commissioning colleagues to develop new framework guidance to support care providers in understanding:

- When an assessment / review of someone's needs is required
- When an incident or concern can be managed by the service
- When incidents or concerns should be reported to commissioning teams
- When a Safeguarding Adults Referral should be undertaken

A care provider workshop is being held early April 2026 to review and test out the guidance, with a view to implementing during the Autumn period. It is hoped that this will provide all care providers in Leeds a clear framework within which to make decisions.

D. Home takeover / Cuckooing

With increasing feedback from members through self-assessments and dashboard contributions, and from third sector organisations about this form of abuse, the Board had a focused session at its December 2025 meeting. This included an analysis of issues from the perspective of West Yorkshire Police, Housing Leeds, Adults & Health and Safer Leeds.

It was recognised that there is nationally recognised work being undertaken in Leeds. The Board will support this work by promoting awareness of these resources, and seeking assurances that members have embedded this into practice

Resources:

- **Cuckooing Toolkit for Professionals**
- **Virtual Reality Experience and E-learning resource**
- The Board has added to this with **easy read resources**, and additional **video resources**.

E. Self-neglect

We have been working across sectors to co-produce an approach to improving multi-agency working in Leeds. This has involved partnering with the Social Care Institute of Excellence (SCIE), a leading sector improvement organisation to facilitate our learning and to help identify enabling factors that promote multi-agency working in the context of self-neglect. This work has moved through several phases already. The Board has been using this as an opportunity to explore different practice models. This work will continue into 2026/27 as we review and update our Self-neglect policies and procedures.

The Board has also commenced a review and refresh of its Leeds Self-neglect Strategy. The Three year Strategy was first developed in 2023 and brought to together learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews, views from practitioners and feedback from adults with care and support needs. An updated version that recognises our progress and our ongoing workstreams will be finalised in the summer of 2026.

F. Exceptional Risk Forum (ERF)

We have continued to provide an Exceptional Risk Forum (ERF). Established in 2021 the forum can accept referrals in relation to any adult aged 18 years or over:

- Who requires assistance with aspects of their day to day living as a result of a physical or mental impairment or illness (including a mental health condition or substance misuse), and;
- Who lives in circumstances of exceptional risk to themselves despite the best efforts of individual agencies and multi-agency approaches to mitigate those risks

Monthly multi-agency forum meetings provide an opportunity to explore possible further avenues of help and support. Chaired at Deputy Director level by the Local Authority, 19 people were discussed at the forum during 2025/26. There have been two previous indepth evaluations that have highlighted the importance of its role and support for frontline practitioners; a further review is being planned for 2026/27.

G. Engagement with housing association and providers

Housing Leeds meets with nominated leads from Housing Association partners twice a year to specifically discuss safeguarding.

In June 2025 the meeting focussed on the Cuckooing Toolkit for professionals that has been developed through Community Safety Team in Leeds. The West Yorkshire Financial Exploitation & Abuse Team presented and an awareness session on the work they undertake to protect those most vulnerable to exploitation.

In November 2025 there was an update on the session that Housing Association partners attended with SCIE in September 2025 to contribute towards developing new approaches when working to support people who self-neglect. There was also a focus on domestic violence & abuse and support for victim survivors and the role of the Exceptional Risk Forum.

Both sessions were interactive with good discussion, questions and comments.

The Housing Manager who leads on safeguarding in Housing Leeds is also a key contact to ensure that Housing Association partners are supported and receive regular bulletins and are encouraged to take up available training offers promoted through the Safeguarding Adults Board.

Housing Associations have also been encouraged to sign up for the LSAB Bulletin and to link in with the LSAB Engagement Officer who can provide free public awareness talks for community groups.

H. Three Board Event

Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board, Safer Leeds and Safeguarding Children Partnership held a joint Board event in September 2025. This was an opportunity to explore shared priorities and overlapping interests. There is already a good collaboration between Boards/Partnerships but these discussions have opened up the possibility of shared workstreams on cross cutting issues. These issues will be taken into 2026/27 for consideration.

4.4. Learning from experience to improve how we work

Why this is so important:

This ambition is based on the need for continued improvement and learning from individual's experiences of support. We want to make sure that learning changes practice and leads to improved experiences for others.

4.4.1. Learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs)

Safeguarding Adults Reviews are held to 'promote effective learning and improvement action to prevent future deaths or serious harm occurring again'. The criteria for a Safeguarding Adults Review is set out in Section 44 of the Care Act 2014 and in summary these are held when:

- an adult at risk of abuse dies as a result of abuse, neglect or self-neglect or
- has experienced serious neglect or abuse, and
- there is concern about how organisations worked together to protect them

Safeguarding Adults Boards have specific legal obligations to report report learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews within their annual reports. The headings a-d) below are reporting requirements set out in Schedule 2 of the Care Act 2014:

a. We must tell you the findings of any Safeguarding Adults Reviews which have concluded during 2025/26
b. We must tell you what has been done during that year to implement the findings of reviews
c. We must tell you about Safeguarding Adults Review that are ongoing at the end of that year
d. We must tell you about a decision to not take forward a Safeguarding Adults Review recommendation, and the reasons for this

During 2025/26 however, there were no Safeguarding Adults Reviews that were concluded by the Board. As such, there is is nothing to report in a-d above. Nonethless there has still been much important learning and development activity:

Process development

A review of the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Review processes led to the development of a new approach, which is captured within the Safeguarding Adults Review Policy & Framework published in June 2025. The revised Policy & Framework seeks to ensure that reviews are proportionate and have a clear focus on learning and improvement.

Key features:

- A key element of the new Policy and Framework is the recognition that that there are often two very different starting points for a review:
- The first is where we have a clear understanding of the working together issues between two or more organisations from the scoping enquiry. This means that the starting point for the view can be to set a Solution Focused terms of reference, asking those organisations involved to review their interface issues, identify best practice and an action plan as to how this can be achieved.
- The second is where these working together challenges remain unclear, in which case it is more likely that we would need an external person to be undertaking what we have described as a Focused Exploratory review to identify the learning issues to be addressed.
- Even if a Safeguarding Adults Review is not required, the Board may choose to seek an assurance around individual agency practices. This ensures individual agency learning is achieved even if multi-agency learning or a Safeguarding Adults Review is not required.
- Provision of **specific information for individuals, family members or friends** who may be involved with a review. Prior to this we did not have any dedicated public information or space on our website.

Our Process and Activity

1. Anyone can ask for consideration of a Safeguarding Adults Review to be held by contacting the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board. This is called an SAR Notification. 10 were received during 2025/26.
2. Once received these notifications are considered by a multi-agency sub-group of the Board. If the sub-group take a view that the notification has the potential to meet the criteria for a review, it will contact agencies involved for further information. This is called a 'Scoping Enquiry'. 7 Scoping enquiries were undertaken in this period.
3. With all the information gathered the SAR sub-group will form a recommendation as to whether or not the legal criteria is met. The Board however will make the final decision. 3 Safeguarding Adults Reviews were agreed during 2025/26. Of these, 2 were mandatory as the legal criteria was deemed to be met, 1 was agreed using the Board's discretionary powers.
4. In the event that a Safeguarding Adults Review is not required but there appears to be potential learning for one or more individual agencies involved, the Board may seek an 'individual agency assurance' from that organisation that sets out how they will take forward that learning to inform future practice. Such assurances were received on 2 occasions during 2025/26

Emerging Themes

Of our 10 notifications the predominant concerns related to:

- Self-neglect – 6 of these notifications involved elements of self-neglect. All concerned people who were living within their own homes. These are issues that were prevalent within notifications last year, and highlights the importance of the work referenced at 4.3e with regard to developing our approaches to supporting people who self-neglect.

- Domestic abuse / neglect by family carers – 3 of these notifications involved issues of abuse by family members. Again these were themes highlighted last year, with measures being take forward through the Board Commissioned Independent Review of Safeguarding & Domestic Abuse arrangements (4.3b).

Of the 3 Safeguarding Adults Reviews that commenced during 2025/26 these involved the following types of abuse concerned:

- Self-neglect was the primary feature of two reviews
- Sexual abuse was the primary feature of one review

These involved a range of key issues/themes that will be explored through the review process:

- Information sharing
- Escalation of concerns
- Multi-agency meetings
- Home visits / telephone assessments
- Ending episodes of involvement
- Think family, work family
- Monitoring, review and flagging of concerns
- Deregistration of patients by GPs

These Safeguarding Adults Reviews will be concluded during 2026/27 with learning published on the Board website and with a summary of learning included within the 2026/27 Annual Report.

4.4.2. Ensuring the effectiveness of our safeguarding arrangements in Leeds

The Board has no regulatory functions with respect to its members but it does have a responsibility to ensure the effectiveness of what each of its members does, in support of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

A. Desired outcomes

"Desired outcomes are the things that the person wants to achieve with the support of safeguarding. These may be things such as feeling safe at home, access to community facilities, restricted or no contact with certain individuals or pursuing the matter through the criminal justice system. In this context, Talk to me, hear my voice[4] means:

- "To not make assumptions about what I want or need"
- "Take time to understand what is important to me"

(Leeds Citizen Voices)

To achieve this, it is important to talk to the person at risk right from the beginning about what support they want and what they hope can be achieved and continue this conversation throughout the period in which support is provided. It is also important to be realistic with people about what can and cannot be achieved through the safeguarding procedures"[5]

The Board asked relevant member organisations to undertake individual agency audits around the seeking and achieving of the person's desired outcomes, alongside a multi-agency audit undertaken by its Quality Assurance & Performance Sub-group. At a dedicated Boad meeting in February 2026 reports were received from:

- Adults & Health
- Advonet
- Housing Leeds
- Leeds & York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
- Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust
- Leeds Teaching Hospital NHS Trusts
- West Yorkshire Police
- LSAB Quality Assurance & Performance Sub-group

Much assurance was gained from these reports alongside important learning for further development too:

"Speaking directly to people isn't just good practice – it transforms outcomes. When we ask people about their desired outcomes, achievement rates more than triple – the persons own voice is the strongest predictor of success" (Extract: Adults & Health Audit)

A programme of work will be taken forward during 2026/27 to establish how we can reliably capture, across all organisations, the person's views in their own words, this being the best evidence of person centred pratice.

[4] The term 'Talk to me, hear my voice' arose from Leeds citizens themselves, and describe how they would wish to be involved within safeguarding adults processes.

[5] Extract: Leeds multi-agency safeguarding adults policy and procedures (Section 7.2.2)

B. Annual Quality Assurance Dashboard

We have produced an Annual Quality Assurance Dashboard – inclusive of all member agency data / intelligence. This processes establishes areas for each member to be addressing within their organisation. This also helps to inform Board priorities. During 2025/26 this process affirmed our ogoing focus on domestic abuse, self neglect and Cuckooing / Home takeover. It has also led to the inclusion of additional actions for 2026/27, such as embedding the National Safeguarding and Pressure Ulcer guidance into practice.

C. Quality & Impact Assurance: Self-assessment

The Annual Self-assessment requires member organisations to review how they have taken forward the Board's learning, resources and ambitions during the previous 12 months. These will include a focus on Board priorities, new guidance or learning points from reviews, for example; the Provision of opportunities to disclose abuse, the Escalation of concerns to safeguarding leads, How effectively 'Talk to me, hear my voice' principles are embedded in practice. This is an important element of the Board's responsibility to ensure that member organisations have effective arrangments in place to safeguard leeds citizens.

5. Our plans for the year ahead

Our Annual Report provides a snap shot of our progress in Leeds, our Strategic Plan provides details of how we intend to build upon these in the year ahead. This summary highlights some key objectives for next year. A fuller summary is available on our website.

Developing citizen-led approaches to safeguarding

- We plan to develop and promote best practice with regard to seeking the person's desired outcomes in their own words and to measure how effectively this is working

Improve awareness of safeguarding across all communities and partner organisations

- We plan to hold an engagement event with third sector organisations to establish how we can support their work to safeguard adults
- We plan to provide safeguarding guidance for faith communities
- We plan to adopt a community first approach that seeks to learn from ethincally diverse communities as to how organisations can provide accessible services.
- We plan to hold a West Yorkshire Safeguarding Week (June) as well as a Leeds Safeguarding Week (November) to promote awareness and undestanding

Develop citywide approaches to safeguarding

- We plan to undertake a review of safeguarding arrangements for adults and care and support needs at risk of domestic abuse
- We plan to promote cuckooing / home takeover awareness and resources
- We plan to publish a 'decision support framework for care providers' to support safeguarding and commissioner notifications.
- We plan to review and refresh our Self-neglect Strategy

Learn from experience to improve how we work

- Identify learning from three ongoing Safegurading Adults Reviews
- We plan to review our approach to holding Safeguarding Adults Reviews, to ensure these are timely, focused and effective in identifying learning

Appendix One: Leadership

The Care Act 2014 requires Safeguarding Adults Boards to outline what each member has done during that year to implement the strategy that was set out at the beginning of the year. The Board has a range of workstreams that are taken forward via Sub-groups and Task & Finish Groups. This summary illustrates the commitment and involvement of member organisations in realising the Board's strategy, as well as the engagement and support of wider partners.

Quality Assurance & Performance Sub-group

This sub-group is responsible for developing the Board's quality assurance and performance processes as well as the Board's policy and procedures. It meets monthly. Its core membership is listed below, but wider members may take part within specific meetings.

- Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust (Sub-group Chair)
- Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust
- Leeds & York Partnership Foundation NHS Trust
- Leeds City Council: Housing
- Leeds City Council: Adults & Health: Commissioning
- Leeds City Council: Adults & Health: Social Work Services
- West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board
- LSAB Strategy Unit

Safeguarding Adults Review Sub-group

This sub-group oversees all Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) processes on behalf of the Board. This will include the seeking of assurances of both learning and change in situations where a SAR was not deemed to be required. Membership:

- Independent Chair (Sub-group Chair)
- The Chair of the Quality Assurance & Performance Sub-group)
  (Leeds Teaching Hospital NHS Trust)
- The Board's Learning & Development Lead
  (West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board)
- Leeds City Council: Adults & Health: Social Work Services
- West Yorkshire Police
- Advonet
- Leeds City Council: Legal Services
- LSAB Strategy Unit

Learning & Development Lead and Links

A representative from the NHS West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board holds the lead role in relation to the Board's Learning & Development, working in conjunction with Learning & Development Links across member/partner organisations. These links are outlined below:

- Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust
- Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust
- Leeds & York Partnership Foundation NHS Trust
- Leeds City Council: Housing
- Leeds City Council: Adults & Health: Commissioning
- Leeds City Council: Adults & Health: Social Work Services
- NHS West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board

- Voluntary Action Leeds
- Leeds Probation
- Department of Work & Pensions
- Advonet
- Leeds City Council: Adults & Health Workforce Development
- West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service
- West Yorkshire Police
- LSAB Strategy Unit

Leeds Self-neglect Strategy Group

The Self-neglect Strategy Group has developed the Leeds Self-Neglect Strategy and is working to promote and embed this within Leeds. Membership comprises:

- Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust (Group Chair)
- Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust
- Leeds & York Partnership Foundation NHS Trust
- Leeds City Council: Housing
- West Yorkshire Fire & Rescue Service
- Leeds City Council: Adults & Health: Commissioning
- Leeds City Council: Adults & Health: Social Work Services
- NHS West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board
- Safer Stronger Communities
- LSAB Strategy Unit

Exceptional Risk Forum (ERF)

The Exceptional Risk Forum was developed to support practitioners when working with people living within situations of exceptional risk. It is established by the Board but the advice given is that of its member organisations. Core membership includes the following with additional representation included where relevant to a particular case discussion:

- Leeds City Council: Adults & Health (Forum Chair)
- Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust
- Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust
- Leeds & York Partnership Foundation NHS Trust
- Leeds City Council: Housing
- Forward Leeds
- NHS West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board

Multi-agency Working Steering Group

This steering group has been working to understand how to improve multi-agency working in Leeds. It involves sector leads as well as SCIE as an independent partner with expertise. It comprises:

- Independent Chair (Steering Group Chair)
- Social Care Institute of Excellence (SCIE)
- Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust
- Leeds City Council: Housing
- NHS West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board
- Adults & Health: Social Work Services
- Integrated Commissioning
- Forward Leeds

- St. Annes Community Services
- West Yorkshire Police
- LSAB Strategy Unit

Safeguarding within ethnically diverse communities

This working group is seeking to develop a community first model for working with communities, to find accessible ways for people to be able and feel able to access safeguarding services. Membership comprises the following, however a wider steering group is currently being established.

- Adult Health & Social Care (Project group Chair)
- Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership
- Safer Stronger Communities
- Leeds Children Services
- Voluntary Action Leeds
- Public Health
- Forum Central
- LSAB Strategy Unit

Friends of the Board

The Friends of the Board are a network of supportive services/organisations that are willing to provide us with advice and support and to help us promote awareness of safeguarding adults. They meet with the Independent Chair and the Board's Engagement Officer at least annually.

- Armley Helping Hands
- Association of Blind Asians
- AVSED
- Barca
- Basis
- Burmantofts Community Friends
- Carers Leeds
- Fix Your Future
- Forward Leeds
- Hamara Centre
- Hawksworth Older Peoples Support Service
- Holbeck Together
- Leeds Black Elders Association
- Leeds BME Hub
- Leeds Hearing & Sight Loss Service
- Leeds Irish Health & Homes
- Leeds Jewish Welfare Board
- Leeds Mind
- Leeds Sikh Elders
- OPAL
- People Matters Leeds
- Richmond Hill Elderly Action
- Swarthmore Centre
- Together Women
- Women's Health Matters

Independent Review: Safeguarding & Domestic Abuse Review Group

This group is bringing to together the work of key sector leads to support an independent review of our safeguarding arrangements for adults with care and support needs experiencing domestic abuse.

- LSAB Independent Chair
- Independent reviewer
- Adults Health & Social Care: Social Work Services
- Adults Health & Social Care: Commissioning
- Leeds Teaching Hospital NHS Trust
- West Yorkshire Police
- Safer Stronger Communities
- Leeds Domestic Violence Services

Appendix Two: Leeds Safeguarding Activity

Application of the Leeds Citizen-led multi-agency safeguarding adults policy and procedures during 2025/26

Whilst it is the Safeguarding Adults Board that produces the multi-agency safeguarding policy and procedures, it is the local authority who then lead and coordinate the work of partners to help and protect an individual from abuse, neglect and self-neglect. This responsibility is given to them under Section 42 of the Care Act 2014. The following information provides a brief overview of their work with partners to safeguard people in Leeds:

Safeguarding Concern raised:

There were 15,871 safeguarding concerns raised with the local authority from April 2025 to March 2026. This is an increase of 2,849 (22%) over the previous year:

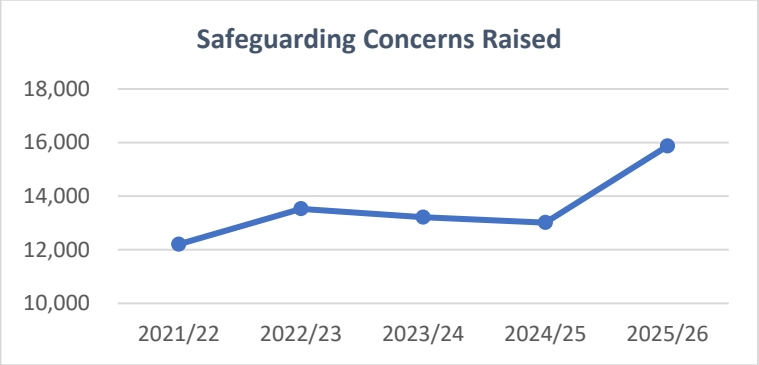
2021/22: 12,205

2022/23: 13,526

2023/24: 13,213

2024/25: 13,012

2025/26: 15,871



Safeguarding Enquiries[6]:

When a safeguarding concern is received, the local authority will need to decide whether to undertake a safeguarding enquiry. This decision will be made based upon the legal criteria set out within Section 42 of the Care Act 2014.

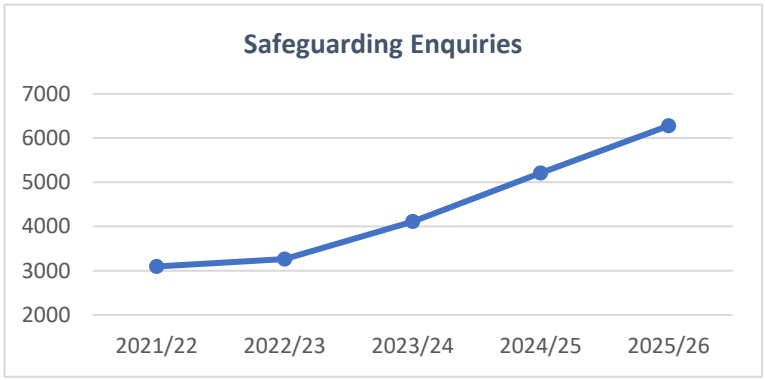
2021/22: 2,990

2022/23: 3,261

2023/24: 4,110

2024/25: 5,101

2025/26: 6,278



With the number of safeguarding concerns increasing by 22% in 2025/26 there was a corresponding 23% increase in the number of safeguarding enquiries undertaken. This resulted in 6,278 safeguarding enquiries being undertaken in 2025/26, which is 1177 more than in the previous year.

[6] This and subsequent data relate to concluded Safeguarding Enquiries during 2025/26

On occasions when a safeguarding enquiry was not required, other forms of support, advice, information or other services will often have been provided dependent upon the nature of the risks, the specific concerns and the person's particular needs and wishes.

The nature of the concerns:

During 2025/26 safeguarding enquiries concerned the following types of possible abuse.

- Neglect and acts of omission: 33%
- Physical abuse: 20%
- Self-neglect: 16%
- Financial or material abuse: 10%
- Psychological abuse: 10%
- Domestic abuse: 6%
- Sexual abuse: 3%
- Organisational abuse: 2%
- Sexual exploitation: < 1%
- Discriminatory abuse: < 1%
- Modern slavery: < 1%

This pattern of safeguarding concerns is largely consistent with last year. The most significant change from 2024/25 is a 6% increase in self-neglect enquiries, now making it the third rather than fifth most common safeguarding enquiry. This may reflect the Board's continued focus on this issue. Neglect and acts of omission remain the most common safeguarding enquiry at 33%, an unchanged percentage from the previous year, followed again by physical abuse albeit with reduced numbers. It is important to note however that a safeguarding enquiry may involve a person at risk who is experiencing more than one type of abuse.

The support needs of people at risk:

Safeguarding works to help adults with care and support needs who are unable to protect themselves without support. The type of social services support being provided to the adult at risk at the time of the incident/concerns is outlined below:

- Physical Support: 30%
- Learning Disability Support: 17%
- Support with Memory & Cognition: 15%
- Mental Health Support: 13%
- Social Support: 3%
- No support reason: 1%
- Not known: 21%

These figures relate to a person's primary support reason and as such it is important to note that a person may have more than one form of support need. 'No support reason' means that the individual was not receiving, nor did they need, any social services support at the time of the safeguarding incident.

The ethnic diversity of people at risk:

During 2025/26 the ethnicity of those supported was:

- White: 81%

- Mixed / Multiple: 1%
- Asian / Asian British: 3%
- Black / African / Caribbean / Black British: 3%
- Other ethnic group: 1%
- Undeclared/unknown: 11%

According to census records for 2021, 79% of the Leeds population are White and so this group may be slightly over-represented within safeguarding enquiries. Conversely some minority ethnic communities may be under-represented. For these reasons the Board is currently undertaking a project to work with diverse communities to make support more accessible (See Section 4.1b).

Location of safeguarding concerns

Safeguarding concerns may arise within very different situations and circumstances. Whilst most commonly these concerns arise within people's own homes (52%) a significant proportion occur within health and care settings as illustrated below:

- Own Home: 52%
- In the community (excluding community services): 3%
- In a community service: 2%
- Care Home – Nursing: 5%
- Care Home – Residential: 26%
- Hospital - Acute : 6%
- Hospital - Mental Health: 2%
- Hospital – Community: 1%
- Other: 3%

Outcomes of safeguarding enquiries

Support provided within the multi-agency policy and procedures should always be with recognition of the person's desired outcomes and with the objective of reducing risk to that person's safety and well-being.

- **Desired outcomes:**

During 2025/26 the person's desired outcomes were Fully or Partially achieved in 95% of occasions, which is unchanged from the previous year. It should be noted however that it is not always possible to achieve someone's desired outcomes, these can sometimes be unachievable, or actions may be required for the safety of others contrary to the person's wishes.

- **Risk reduced or removed**:

During 2025/26 the risk experienced by the person was reduced or removed in 90% of safeguarding enquiries, this is consistent with the previous year. Sometimes people may choose to live with risk or it may remain with strategies in place, and so it is again necessary to look at individual cases to understand why a risk may remain.

Appendix Three: Leeds & West Yorkshire Safeguarding Week programmes

Programme of events for Leeds Safeguarding Fortnight 2025

- Learnings from gambling in sport - Ann Craft Trust
- “Let’s Talk Cyber Abuse/Safety” Enhanced Safeguarding Mental Capacity and Mental Health Act Training – LTHT / WYP
- Sexuality & relationships in the lives of adults with learning disabilities - Ann Craft Trust
- A holistic approach to the prevention of abuse in sport - Ann Craft Trust
- Stalking briefing - Safeguarding and Domestic Violence Team, LCC
- Preventing abuse- MacIntyre's Everyone Everywhere" - Ann Craft Trust
- Introduction to HM Young Offenders Institution Wetherby Enhanced Safeguarding Mental Capacity and Mental Health Act Training – LTHT / LCH
- Financial exploitation and abuse - WFEAT
- Understanding and preventing forced marriage of people with learning disabilities - Ann Craft Trust
- Free safeguarding adults training for volunteers - A&H, LCC
- Trauma & resilience Informed practice, what it is, what it isn't, and how it can change the world - Warren Larkin
- Using the Mental Capacity Act with a balanced Human Rights focus - WYICB
- What you need to know about fabricated or Induced Illness, perplexing presentations or medically unexplained symptoms - LSCP
- Trust your Instincts - physical abuse and safeguarding adults - Ann Craft Trust
- An Introduction to the Disclosure and Barring Service's products and services - DBS
- Home fire safety - person, home, behaviour and combined risk - WYFRS
- Cuckooing - It's happening In Leeds – Safer Leeds
- Assessing risk, safety planning, Domestic Abuse, Stalking & Honour Based Violence (DASH) model, and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) - Safeguarding and Domestic Violence Team, LCC
- Listen to my safeguarding story - Advonet
- County lines In West Yorkshire - WYP – [Cancelled but rearranged]
- Free safeguarding adults training for volunteers - A&H
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill - LSCP
- Interactive guide to safeguarding adults – LSAB, online resource free to access anytime
  Abuse of older adults webinars – Hour Glass, online resource, free to access anytime
- Introduction to Public Health training video· online resource, free to access anytime - Public Health

Programme of events for
West Yorkshire Safeguarding Week 2025

Session Topic:	Hosted by:
• **Financial exploitation and abuse**	**Leeds**
• **Cuckooing! It's happening in West Yorkshire**	**Leeds**
• **County Lines in West Yorkshire**	**Leeds**
• **Child exploitation, the rise of AP (all play/apartment) parties**	**Leeds**
• Safeguarding in complex circumstances	Kirklees
• Alcohol Use, Self-Neglect and Barriers to Support	Wakefield
• Engaging with men	Wakefield
• Pride in Practice LGBTQIA+	Wakefield
• Creating an Inclusive Environment	Wakefield
• Growing up is a process not an event	Calderdale
• Domestic Abuse - A Mothers Story	Calderdale
• Exploring the aspects of modern-day slavery	Bradford
• CSE and missing children	Bradford